



October 1, 2017

From the Conference Minister

Dear Friends,

First of all, I want to thank you all for your outpouring of love, sympathy, and support on the recent death of my father. Your prayers, notes, texts, cards, emails, and messages have meant the world to me and helped make a difficult time much easier.

Second, I have been receiving questions about how can we help our brothers and sisters in Christ who have been affected by the hurricanes and earthquake. Right now, I remind all of us that monetary donations are needed the most. In the coming months there will be ways in which we can help in tangible ways. I will keep you all updated on mission trips and projects as they arise. Please remember that it will take time for the infrastructure to be restored enough that the affected states, territories, and countries will be able to accommodate mission trips.



If you and your congregation wants to do something immediately, Church World Service is in desperate need for Clean Up Buckets and Hygiene Kits. You can find the information on their website: cwskits.org. This may seem like a small thing, but the smallest things can make the biggest difference in the life of a person who has been through a natural disaster.

Thirdly, I continue to thoroughly enjoy my tour of congregations across the conference. On October 1st I had the pleasure of visiting the Church of the Savior UCC in Knoxville, TN for their 60th Anniversary and the dedication of the bell in the Memorial Garden. If you have a special event coming up, give me sufficient notice and I'll do my best to be there!

In light of yet another mass shooting and national tragedy, may we all continue to hold each other and the places in our world that are hurting in prayer.

Blessings,
Marie

News from the United Church of Christ

UCC general minister responds to Las Vegas shooting

Rev. John Dorhauer, saddened and

Rev. Traci Blackmon: It is up to US to stop gun violence

The UCC Justice and Witness Ministries Executive Minister writes: "My heart weeps for those who are waking this morning to

sickened over the loss of life in a mass shooting Sunday night in Las Vegas, offered prayers on Monday morning for those killed, the injured, their families, the first responders on the scene, and those who continue to provide physical and pastoral care in that community.

Watch the video here:



notifications of the deaths and injuries of loved ones needlessly gunned down last night. My heart weeps for a nation that will once again gather to mourn the dead without committing to the deeper work of sensible gun reform. May the groaning pains of this nation lift us up from our praying knees to call on our policymakers to demand legislative changes to gun laws in this country. May we stop wringing our hands in helpless disbelief and satiating our hearts with false narratives of lone gunmen. Because until we do all we can to prevent such mass shootings, no gunman acts alone. From Sandy Hook to Texas to Charleston to Virginia Tech to Pulse to Las Vegas...Lord, hear our cries and compel us to act."

[Read Traci's article to learn eight actions that you can begin today.](#)

News from Around the Conference



Prayer List

We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers, congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2017. We encourage you to include these prayer requests in your local church newsletter, share them with your prayer circle, and include them in your own prayers. [Click here to download the entire 2017 prayer list.](#)

Week of October 1

- Liberty Congregational Christian UCC; Brantley, Alabama
- Retired Servants Event; Blowing Rock Conference Center
- Leslie Carmack
- Bob Hurst
- Jeremy Rutledge
- Van Tony Welch

Week of October 8

- Holy Trinity Community Church; Nashville, Tennessee
- Western Association, Southeast Conference
- Martha Sue Carter
- Joseph Ingle
- Kenneth Samuel

Prayer Requests

- Please keep the many people across North America affected by tragedy in your prayers:
 - Those in Mexico City who are recovering from the earthquake
 - Those in the Caribbean and Puerto Rico recovering from Hurricane Maria

- and those in Las Vegas who lost their lives, who were injured and their friends and families (and our entire country).
- Remember that UCC Disaster Ministries stays at the scene of the devastation long after the media leaves, helping communities rebuild and people recover. You can learn more about this vital ministry here: www.ucc.org/disaster

Training and Retreat Opportunities

Winter Youth Retreat 2018: January 12-15

The Winter Youth Retreat 2018 committee is excited to invite you to the retreat January 12-15th, 2018. Once again the youth will be gathering at the Blowing Rock Conference Center in Blowing Rock, North Carolina. The presenter this year will be Abbi Long and the musicians are Gravel & Silk – the will consider the theme “Am I Good?”



New this year! Registration and information is on the retreat website: www.UCCWinterYouthRetreat.org. Head there now for all of the retreat info.

The leaders also stay in touch with the youth and our wider church community through the WYR Facebook group – UCC Winter Youth Retreat

There will be limited scholarships available to youth groups, please let the leadership team know if your group has a need before the first registration deadline (11/03/2017).

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